

## **DMAp Action Group Notes**

**March 9, 2013**

DNR staff present: Jeff Pritzl, Tom Hauge, Eric Lobner, Scott Roepke, Scott Gunderson, Kurt Thiede

DMAp Action group participants: Robert Benson (QDMA), Andy Pantzlaff (United Sportsman of WI), Doug Seidl (WCC), Jane Severt (WCFA), Greg Szalewski (WI Traditional Archers), Joe Caputo (WCC), Ralph Fritsch (WWF), Dale Zaig (WWOA), Bill Horvath (WWOA)

Jeff – If you want to learn more about Jeff, please visit his blog:

<http://wdnr.blogs.govdelivery.com/>

**Presentation:** Jeff gave some additional details about the potential components of DMAp to begin the thought process. Maintaining healthy deer herds while maintaining habitat integrity is a primary goal of DMAp. The long term threat to deer hunting may be that hunters may not be able to adequately manage the deer herd in the future, and society will seek other control mechanisms. Leopold's conservation vision is a state of harmony between men and land. The agency was only intended to be an interim management authority until the general public could take over after acquiring the necessary knowledge to make responsible decisions. This is similar to what DMAp could be like. DMAp is more than just deer. It could be a chance to get to what Leopold wanted.

Will we pilot DMAp? Guynn recommended a 2 year pilot. Other states have used much longer pilots but we probably don't have that luxury in WI. This group will be able to weigh-in on whether or not we should have a pilot.

Fritsch – A pilot may depend on how many DNR personnel are available. Will we use UW extension staff? For example, if we have \_# of DNR staff available, how far can you expand it – \_# trial areas?

Pantzlaff – the CWD area is different than the north, south, east, and west. Would recommend doing a pilot all over the state. Students could intern to help out. Boots on the ground was a big factor in the DTR, this includes biologist and forester involvement.

Tom – Ralph's question is a data request that we can do for the next meeting. Building relationships through DMAp should probably include using DNR biologists.

Horvath – There are 327,000 woodland owners in WI. Half own less than 10 acres. Landowners in the north own more land than those in the south. Land management also varies across the state. There are 300 land and water conservation staff out there, 200+ NRCS agents and lots of biologists. Use the other groups that are out there. Thinks we should have pilots, two years will be too short though. We will need to evaluate how it works, how will we expand it, etc.

Benson – agrees with a pilot. DMAP will be similar to QDMA. We will need to figure out the advantages to the landowners so that we can sell the program.

Fritsch – The pilot properties can be used as demonstration areas to expand the program.

Lobner – DMAP could be similar to MFL, where private contractors are certified to write management plans. It's really up to this group.

Pantzlaff – Opponent of earn-a-buck, our kids need to be able to see deer but we can't let populations get too high.

Caputo – DMAP needs to be around long term and we need to be able to bring in the public. There is no blueprint for DMAP. We have the opportunity to start from scratch with this.

Fritsch – the northern part of the state should be managed differently than the southern half. We need to restructure the relationship between landowners and the department.

Zaug – expectations are high for deer hunting. The food (young forest) is gone in the north. This is a people management problem. We also need to be talking about taxes.

Horvath – will need to group landowners together to make DMAP more effective.

Severt – forestry and wildlife staff are already working together. The Division of Forestry priority is to pull back resources from MFL to be more efficient. There will be more resources put into lands that are not enrolled in MFL. So there will be this switch in focus in Div of Forestry. Wildlife management might be the trigger to get some landowners involved in forestry.

Horvath – workshops are held annually by various groups involved with habitat management. There are ways to reduce DNR efforts in getting things organized if we put our heads together. There are a lot of tools out there that can be pulled together.

Benson – the customer is the landowner. How do we show them the benefits? They want to see deer and some nice bucks mixed in. People want to be educated. How can people improve their habitats? We need to focus on the customer. What are the goals of the landowner? It's about education. People want biologists to come out to the property and educate them.

Pritzl – Guynn said the most rewarding aspect of DMAP is watching landowners transition from being deer hunters to land managers and botanists and having them make sustainable decisions because they want to make them not because they are forced to.

Caputo – This group doesn't representing the public as a whole, which we need to be cautious about. Is there something that's already been completed that streamlines all of the opportunities?  
Hauge – not aware of any efficiency process improvements relative to delivery of services to landowners. Maybe we should look at who's doing it right. Is there somebody that we could follow?

Caputo – how do we find a way to get the mechanics done?

Pantzlaff – we need landowner participation. There will be key people participating in DMAP that will step up. The DNR can train people who will then train others participants. When the trainers don't know how to handle a process they can go back to the DNR. The biological data can be collected by the landowners. DMAP was originally intended to reduce deer herds but it can also work in the opposite direction.

Horvath – as a society, we don't necessarily work together. Demands of each bureau/agency limit cooperation. We need to focus on working together.

Zaug –we need to look at other states for minimum acreages.

Benson –Participating landowners will need to be spending money and many will be willing. People will want to jump on board if DMAP is a success.

Hauge – DMAP can apply to public lands as well, including county, state, and federal forests. You folks are gateways to bigger memberships. Please spread the word on the survey so that we can collect their thoughts as well.

Pantzlaff – suggests adding “with your input” to the recommended antlerless harvest questions.

Horvath – landowners often manage for more than deer. Can we ask a question about managing for other wildlife? Roepke – there is a question on the survey that ask potential participants if they would be interested in managing for wildlife other than deer.

Caputo –we need to be looking at DMAP from a public perspective. What does DMAP mean to the general public. We can't forget about the public land hunters or non-landowners. We can't lose the public/private landowner relationship.

Benson- how does DMAP apply to state forests?

Caputo – what do we want it to mean? Expanding DMAP past private ownership? Public land hunters will be vested in management of public lands.

Sievert – There may be conflicts using DMAP on public lands. Most hunters want more deer, foresters want fewer.

Hauge – non-DMAP enrollees will want to know why they should support the program if they can't be involved.

Horvath – MFL gets criticized for not allowing hunting on all acres. The DNR should survey MFL properties to see what those lands are providing for access.

Caputo – we don't want to lock the non-landowners or non-DMAP participants out of the program.

Pantzlaff – public land in the north where regrowth is an issue may need more attention. Hunters in the north need more buy in to shoot more deer. We should conduct a pilot in areas with few deer to see if we can increase deer herds.

Caputo – this could be two programs: one for private lands and one for public lands. We can create whatever system we want. We need to be aware of the other hunters though. The DNR has been lacking in its outreach efforts. DMAP could improve the outreach between the DNR, landowners, and hunters.